



Cal Special District Magazine, January 2012

February 8, 2012
Agenda Item 14c

THANK YOU FOR ANOTHER HUGE SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITOR SHOWCASE!

This year's CSDA Annual Conference and Exhibitor Showcase was another great event, offering hundreds of attendees educational and networking opportunities. Set in beautiful Monterey, California, over 500 attendees came together to explore the issues facing special districts, including financial topics, board and staff relationship matters, legal compliance challenges and much more. Top speakers in their field provided the keynotes throughout the event, speaking on the importance and power of great relationships, how to inspire passion and productivity in special district offices and the significance of special districts in the local economy. Each speaker took their years of experience and shed new light on how to innovate and improve on leadership and effective public service.

Every year, CSDA makes it a priority to give attendees the chance to network and get to know one another through receptions, special events and the exhibit hall, where over 50 exhibitors were ready to demonstrate solutions to the needs of districts. Seeing so many public servants in one location discussing the issues that matter to them and their districts is inspiring and one of the things that makes the Annual Conference such a significant event.

Of course, no CSDA conference would be complete without recognizing the outstanding work districts are doing in their community and the CSDA Awards program provides the opportunity to recognize individuals and agencies for their hard work. Congratulations to the following award winners for their outstanding achievements in the following areas:

Board President of the Year

Al Schoenstein, McCloud Community Services District

General Manager of the Year (small district)

Roy Carter, Greenhorn Creek Community Services District

General Manager of the Year (large district)

James D. Ruth, Orange County Sanitation District

Excellence in Community Service

Desert Recreation District, First Tee of Coachella Valley program

CSDA Chapter of the Year

San Diego Chapter

Innovative Program Award

San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District, Fire Department CPR/AED Application

Exceptional Public Outreach Award (small district)

Lancaster Cemetery District

Exceptional Public Outreach (large district)

Mesa Consolidated Water District

William Hollingsworth Award of Excellence

Nominated and voted on by the CSDA Board of Directors, the 2011 Hollingsworth Award recipient is Peter Detwiler.

Legislative Advocate of the Year

Nominated and voted on by the CSDA Legislative Committee, the 2011 Legislative Advocate of the Year recipient is Kirsten McLaughlin from the Irvine Ranch Water District.

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Does your district have an individual recently appointed as general manager or a top staff position? Have you recently elected a new board president? Have any district personnel been appointed to other community boards or positions? Email your district's movers and shakers to Nicole Dunn, communication specialist, at Nicoled@csda.net and we will include them in our next issue!



** Ironhouse Sanitary District welcomes **David Contreras** as its newest board member. The district's Board of Directors selected Contreras to take the place of former board member Don Lew, who passed away. Contreras*

is the retired district manager of Mt. View Sanitary District.

** Long-time member of the Stege Sanitary District, **Jay James**, is retiring from the Board of Directors. James, who has served on the board 28 years, is retiring in order to teach nuclear engineering in Korea.*

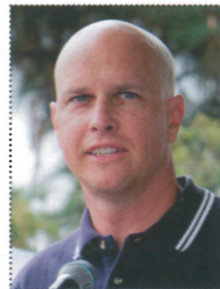
** Stege Sanitary District District Manager/Engineer **Doug Humphrey** has also retired. Humphrey has worked with the district as manager/engineer since 2000. The district welcomes **Rex Delizo** as District Manager. Delizo has been with the district since 1997.*

** The **Central Contra Costa Sanitary District** (CCCSD) has been named the recipient of the California Association of Local Agency Formation Commission's 2011 Government Leadership Award. The award recognized CCCSD for its furtherance of good government efforts in California, focusing on the district's community-based outreach efforts.*

** CCCSD was also recognized with the Platinum 13 Peak Performance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. This award recognizes that the district achieved 100 percent success in ensuring every drop of more than 180 billion gallons of treated wastewater met stringent federal, state and regional water quality standards for the past 13 years.*

** **Darnell Turner**, Board President of **Los Medanos Community Healthcare District** has been nominated and appointed by the Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD) to serve on its Program and Development Committee. The committee has oversight over ACHD annual meetings, its leadership program, trustee education and the association's website and membership directory.*

** **Jim O'Connor** has been selected as Assistant General Manager of Operations for the **East Bay Regional Park District**. O'Connor replaces **John Escobar**, who has retired.*



Irvine Ranch Water District announces the appointment of **Paul A. Cook** as General Manager. Cook has served as the district's Interim General Manager since July and is a registered civil engineer with over 21 years of experience with water and wastewater systems in the public and private sectors. Cook has been with the district since 2004.

continued on page 12

By the Numb3rs

65 – number of parks managed by the East Bay Regional Park District

65

Movers & Shakers [continued]

Kara Partridge Ralston, SDA, Chief Operations Officer at the Camarillo Health Care District, has been named "Woman of Distinction" by the Girl Scouts California Central Coast Chapter. The award honors women in the community whose leadership, courage and participation has helped make a significant impact in the lives of young women.



Solano Irrigation District announces the retirement of **David Mansfield** as General Manager. Mansfield has served the district since 2007 and retires at the end of 2011. The district is currently recruiting to fill this position.

San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District (SRVFPD) Fire Chief **Richard Price** has been selected by the American Heart Association as the 2012 "Heart of Gold" honoree. The award honors an individual who has made significant contributions to the advancement of cardiovascular disease protection and has enhanced the welfare of the Greater Bay Area community. In January 2011, SRVFPD released an innovative new location-aware mobile phone application that empowers everyday citizens to provide life-saving assistance to victims of Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

The California Association of Sanitation Agencies awarded **Ironhouse Sanitary District** with its Technological Innovation and Achievement Award for the district's new Wastewater Treatment and Water Recycling Facility. The award is given to agencies in recognition of an innovative application of existing technology or the development of new cutting-edge technology applied to wastewater-related services.

West County Wastewater District has received the Certificate for Outstanding Financial Reporting from the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The district has been awarded for its CAFR for 12 consecutive years. ■

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A Commitment to Public Law

Windsor Town Council (from left to right: Steve Allen, Robin Goble, Cheryl Scholar, Sam Salmon, Debora Fudge)

Windsor has a beautiful mixed-use traditional downtown - that was built less than 10 years ago! Meyers Nave was instrumental in helping the Town Council realize its vision. Mixed-use was an old idea, but modern zoning precluded much of the design we sought. Meyers Nave helped us work through the labyrinth and achieve truly spectacular results.

Meyers Nave has represented the Town since it's incorporation in 1992. From tricky personnel issues to the latest in Redevelopment Agency concerns, Meyers Nave has provided outstanding counsel & legal advice/direction. I have developed personal working relationships with the Town Attorneys that give me a strong sense of trust and confidence.

Mayor Steve Allen - Town of Windsor

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In Brief



Hidden Valley Lake CSD Breaks Ground on Carbon-Free Power Project

The Hidden Valley Lake Community Services District has broken ground on a solar power project for its wastewater treatment plant. This project effectively takes the wastewater treatment plant off the grid and converts it to 100 percent solar power. The net benefit of the project is two-fold: it stabilizes the energy costs at the water reclamation plant for the next three decades and significantly reduces the district's carbon footprint. In the face of the rising cost of fossil fuels that is a significant benefit to the CSD's ratepayers.

The project was funded by USDA grants of nearly \$1 million and \$640,000 in low-interest loans. The district will be able to fund its loan payments from the savings in its power purchase costs. "This project realizes a long-term goal of our district," says District General Manager Mel Aust. "With USDA's support we'll achieve energy independence and be able to protect our rate payers from long-term volatility in the power market. The solar project will also reduce our carbon emissions by 112 tons per year."

Sources for In Brief and Recognitions: 10news.com, Bakersfield Californian, Camarillo Health Care District, Kern County Water Agency, Rancho California Water District, The Daily Californian, Union Sanitary District

WATER DISTRICT ENCOURAGES EMPLOYEE BONDING WITH PICNIC

While most districts understand the importance of employees in the workplace connecting to work together in the best way possible, Joshua Basin Water District (JBWD) and other water districts in the area took that concept a step further. By organizing an "all water districts" picnic, over 75 area water district employees and their families came together to enjoy the outdoors and take part in team-building activities. The employees represented four local water districts. "In the event of a disaster, no one water district can handle it alone," says JBWD Public Information and Outreach Coordinator Kathleen Radnich, who also organized the event. "We need each other. This team building activity is to pull us all together, to build our relationships so we know each other better."



MVSD OFFERS LAB INTERNSHIP FOR CHEMISTRY STUDENTS

Recognizing the importance of encouraging youth to pursue their interests in future careers, Mt. View Sanitary District has launched a lab internship program for high school students. Students who have completed an honors or advanced placement chemistry class are eligible for the internship and will spend time working in the district's treatment plant laboratory directly with the district chemist. The program is designed to give potential chemistry or environmental science college majors a first-hand look at laboratory operations in the wastewater field. Interns will learn lab and treatment plant safety training and have the opportunity to assist in lab maintenance, chemical analysis and database management.

continued on page 34

Uploaded: Thursday, January 12, 2012, 10:59 AM

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Thursday, January 12, 2012

Agency could end hospital's tax power

The county's Local Agency Formation Commission might be an obscure agency, but a new state law has empowered it to bypass voters and eliminate special districts, and the El Camino Hospital District may be its first target.

"If we find that if there's a district that isn't needed anymore, we may move for dissolution of that district," said Mountain View City Council member Margaret Abe-Koga, a member of the LAFCO board.

A recent Grand Jury report questioning the activities of the district has prompted LAFCO to take the unusual measure of auditing the hospital district as part of a regular service review due in May -- a review that could recommend the district's dissolution, said LAFCO executive officer Neelima Palacherla.

The hospital district includes Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Los Altos and adjacent unincorporated areas.

But hospital district officials disagree with Assemblyman Rich Gordon, who authored AB912, about its power over hospital districts.

The new law "doesn't apply to healthcare districts," said Chris Ernst, director of marketing and corporate communications for El Camino Hospital.

Staff members in Rich Gordon's office who spoke to the **==I Voice==** disagreed with Ernst's assessment.

"The answer is pretty simple," the staff member said. "AB912 as written is encompassing of all special districts, including healthcare districts."

In response, Ernst said that AB912 did not change the state law applicable to hospital district dissolutions.

"Government code section 57103 specifically states that any resolution ordering the dissolution of a health care district is subject to confirmation by the voters," Ernst wrote in an email. "AB912 modified only Government Code section 57077 and did not terminate or otherwise modify, amend this statutory requirement in Government Section 57103."

==B Law's intent==

Gordon's office said that was not the legislature's intent, according to the analysis of the bill state legislators were given before they voted to pass it with "overwhelming bi-partisan support."

"Absent majority-protest, the dissolution occurs without an election," the analysis reads. "For district dissolutions that are consistent with LAFCO policies, the bill trumps special statutory provisions, including those for hospital districts."

"That was the understanding of all legislators who voted on the bill and the governor who signed it into law," said Gordon's staffer.

LAFCO hopes to clarify the matter.

"That's something that's being looked into," Palacherla said. "When the legislation was being drafted that was the intent -- that hospital districts will not be exempt. That will be clarified, I think."

==B Grand jury's concerns==

Abe-Koga said the agency's interest in the hospital district was raised by last year's Santa Clara Civil Grand Jury report, which questioned El Camino's purchase of a facility in Los Gatos, outside of the hospital district. The grand jury report also found that the hospital district and the non-profit organization formed by the district "appears to operate as one unit," intermingling funds in such a way "that one cannot delineate how taxpayer contributions are spent" -- an assertion that hospital officials dispute.

"We felt it was important to look into it given the grand jury report," Abe-Koga said. "Concerns have been brought up. There have been concerns about the purchase of the Los Gatos facility. How are they able to purchase a facility outside of the district?"

Palacherla said the El Camino Hospital District is one of 70 healthcare districts in the state, created after World War II to alleviate a hospital shortage, mostly in rural areas. It is run by a publicly elected, five-person board, the same board which runs the hospital.

"The question now is what are these districts doing and is it appropriate for them to continue?" Palacherla said. "Are they meeting the mission and mandate for which they were created?"

In 1956, the El Camino Hospital District was created to run a hospital and to operate it, Palacherla said. "Over time they have transferred the hospital to a non-profit corporation and the non-profit corporation now runs the hospital. So the question is, 'What does the hospital district do?'"

Ernst said that the district provides \$9 million a year to the hospital in the form of a 1 percent parcel tax, while another \$6.5 million a year pays off voter-approved bonds for new facilities on Grant Road. Of the tax money received last year, \$5 million went towards "community benefit" programs, such as the Mayview Health Clinic and the Community Health Awareness Council, among others.

She says that the hospital publishes an annual audit online and in local newspapers that clearly shows how district funds are spent.

Find this article at:

http://mv-voice.com/news/show_story.php?story_id=5154

Contra Costa regulators vote to dissolve Mt. Diablo Health Care District

By Lisa Vorderbrueggen
Contra Costa Times

Posted: 01/12/2012 07:15:54 AM PST

Updated: 01/12/2012 09:37:45 AM PST

MARTINEZ -- Contra Costa regulators will disband a small public health care district that lost its hospital 16 years ago and went on to spend the bulk of its \$3 million in property tax proceeds on overhead, elections, legal bills and free lifetime medical benefits for several directors.

The Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission voted unanimously Wednesday to dissolve the Mt. Diablo Health Care District, the first such act in the state since California lawmakers adopted new rules allowing regulators to eliminate public agencies without holding an election.

The district includes about 205,000 residents in Concord, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Clyde and Pacheco, along with portions of Walnut Creek, Clayton and Lafayette.

Advocates implored commissioners for a stay during the three-hour hearing. The district's past performance is imperfect but holds great potential, they urged. Among the speakers were high school students who participate in a local culinary program that received district grant dollars and a once-homeless man who said one of the district-funded programs helped find him shelter.

But the commissioners ultimately agreed with critics, four civil grand juries and their own consultants, who said eliminating the district will free up tens of thousands of dollars for unmet community health needs.

Shifting the program's administration to another public agency will not necessarily cost less or provide residents with

comparable access to the money, added district interim executive director Daymon Doss. He was referring to the two criteria the commission must meet in order to dissolve a public agency.

And the district's attorney described what he characterized as legal uncertainty surrounding the impact of dissolution on its community benefit agreement with John Muir Health. The private nonprofit organization took over the district's Concord hospital in 1996 after the public agency ran into financial troubles.

With no hospital to manage and one part-time staffer, 83 percent of the \$3 million in property tax revenues the district has received since 2000 has gone to pay for administration, legal bills, elections and the highly publicized health care benefits for a current and a former district director, according to the consultants' analysis.

"We can provide grants for worthwhile community programs without the additional costs associated with maintaining the elected health care district," said Contra Costa Supervisor Federal Glover, also a member of the commission.

The commission, which consists of local elected officials, rejected an option that would have restored the roughly \$240,000 a year the district receives to the countywide property tax pool for distribution among the 143 public agencies that receive a share. Under no scenario would taxpayers pay less.

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years, and if most of it were spent on community grants, it would serve a valuable role, commissioners said.

The commission must now decide to which agency to hand over the task.

"We know we want to assign a successor agency," said Lafayette Councilman and commission Chairman Don Tatzin. "But depending on which agency we select, it will require a different process. We need more information about that process before we choose."

Consultants recommend the countywide emergency medical services district. Governed by the county, the existing agency could create a zone that matches the former health care district, set up a grant-making community board and allocate the dollars each year with minimal overhead and no elections.

Concord wants it. But the health care district is larger than the city, and state law bars an agency from spending tax dollars generated outside its boundaries unless 70 percent or more of the registered voters and land area of the bigger entity are within the city's jurisdiction.

To meet the legal standard, the city is looking at filing a petition with the commission for the formation of a smaller subsidiary health care district. The new district would exclude Martinez on the grounds that its taxpayers have not paid into the district at the same rate as its neighbors.

The commission is scheduled to make its choice in March.

Once the commission completes the next step, dissolution could take six months or longer.

It is unclear whether the health care district will mount a legal battle or even if it could afford one.

It projects reserves of nearly \$700,000 in its preliminary 2012 budget, but the amount roughly equals its unfunded liability for health and dental benefits for current Director Grace Ellis and former Director Ron Leone, a Concord councilman. The district banked the cash during the years it spent little or no money on community grants, and it has had no contested elections in six years.

Contact Lisa Vorderbrueggen at 925-945-4773, , www.ibabuzz.com/politics or at [Twitter.com/lvorderbrueggen](https://twitter.com/lvorderbrueggen).



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Contra Costa Times editorial: Fire district plunges further in debt to buy office building

Contra Costa Times editorial
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Posted: 01/17/2012 04:00:00 PM PST

Updated: 01/17/2012 05:04:24 PM PST

It's disappointing to see a public agency take on more debt when it's already buried in it -- especially when the money will go toward a speculative real estate deal and when there were better alternatives that involved less taxpayer risk.

Yet a majority of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District board -- John Wyro, Fred Weil and Frank Sperling -- have decided to borrow \$2 million to purchase of a new administration building. This in a district that's only about 15 years old and has already run up about \$68 million in unfunded pension and retiree health liabilities, or an average of \$1,600 for each adult and child in the district.

The directors had an alternative to the latest debt deal: Rent space in Orinda's underoccupied City Hall, thereby providing the city money it desperately needs and the district a centrally located office space at a very reasonable price. It could have been a win-win for both agencies. Even though Orinda residents provide about 60 percent of the fire district's operating revenues, the district is an autonomous entity that demonstrates no concern for the collective tax burden on city residents.

Instead, the fire board majority decided to push ahead with a speculative scheme to buy a Moraga office building that's twice the size the district needs in a deal that depends heavily on its ability to rent out the extra space. In a district that's already overburdened with debt, this is empire-building at its worst.

Moreover, had the district opted to lease space from the city, the expense would have been charged against the operating budget; instead, it will now come from capital funds that should go to fire

engines and other long-term equipment needs. As a result, the district's operating budget will show more money available for salaries and benefits during labor negotiations.

Wyro, Weil and Sperling have a history of reckless spending. They were part of the 2008 board that ignominiously put the fire district on the national map. Knowing that their then-Chief Pete Nowicki was about to retire, they approved benefit changes to his contract that helped him spike his pension by as much as 20 percent, increasing his annual retirement pay by about \$40,000 to \$241,000 a year.

A year later, Wyro continued to falsely argue that wasn't what the board did. And when confronted with the data, he simply hunkered down. "I'm a policy person," he said. "I'm not someone who spends a lot of time with spreadsheets, other than budgets."

It's that sort of arrogance that's on full display once again. This time, the directors are determined to have their own administration building, even if it means putting the district deeper in debt and speculating on real estate and the leasing market to make the deal work.

On Wednesday evening, the board will approve the financing for the deal -- despite the opposition of residents and the mayor of Orinda, Steve Glazer, who has been a past supporter of the district.

"Given MOFD's numerous unmet financial obligations," Glazer told this newspaper, "I think it

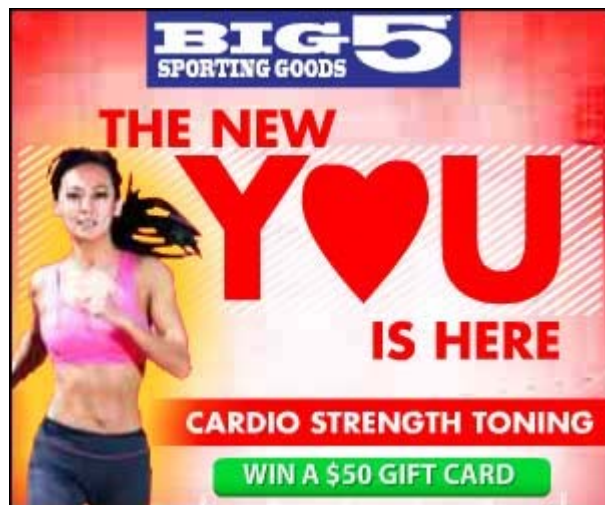


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is crazy for them to purchase this building now and speculate in the real estate market. My confidence in their financial management is at an extremely low level."

We concur.



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Opinion - Friday, January 20, 2012

Hospital could lose district funds

Before the little-known Local Agency Formation Commission dissolves the El Camino Hospital District, we hope hospital officials and those from the commission, including City Council member Margaret Abe-Koga, make every effort to resolve the accounting issues that apparently could wipe out the district and its taxing power.

This would be a huge mistake and take away millions of dollars worth of support to local nonprofit agencies like the Children's Health Awareness Council (CHAC), and the Community Services Agency (CSA), and others which now are the beneficiaries of these funds and would be hard-pressed to recover if the support were taken away.

El Camino's accounting was questioned by a Civil Grand Jury Report issued last summer that, while praising the hospital's successful operation, had major concerns when the hospital "intermingled" funds from the tax district and for-profit operations "...to the extent that that one cannot delineate how taxpayer contributions are spent."

And that is the same concern raised by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), a county agency that oversees all special districts and has recently been empowered by legislation passed last year to be able to dissolve a special district without a vote of the people.

"If we find that there's a district that isn't needed anymore, we may move for dissolution of that district," said Abe-Koga, a City Council member who also sits on the LAFCO board.

Last week El Camino spokeswoman Chris Ernst disputed that the new law gives the commission the power to dissolve a hospital district without a vote, but members of Assemblyman Rich Gordon's staff, who did not want to be named, told the *Voice* that there is no question that hospital districts are covered by the legislation and LAFCO staff members said they are planning to look into it further this week.

A factor prominently mentioned in the Grand Jury report was El Camino's purchase of the Los Gatos hospital in 2009, an out-of-district acquisition that cost nearly \$100 million. The report said, "There is so little detail and transparency to the audit or to the detailed budget provided that the Grand Jury was unable to see where funds were derived for the purchase of the Community Hospital of Los Gatos in 2009..."

In commenting on the report when it was issued last June, Ernst both defended the hospital's bookkeeping practices, but said the hospital also will give "...due consideration to the findings and recommendations in the report."

Now it will be up to the LAFCO board of directors to decide whether to move toward dissolving the district, or allowing it to squeak by. The agency has taken the unusual step of auditing the district as part of its regular service review that is due in May, which could recommend dissolution of the district.

We believe it would be a mistake to snuff out the district. Certainly the hospital must improve its accounting practices to assure LAFCO and the public that all income from taxpayers is tracked and allocated to non-profit practices. In addition, to meet another criticism of the Grand Jury, the hospital needs to make sure one person or entity has full responsibility for how and where the tax funds are spent. There should be absolutely no intermingling of tax funds and those earned in other ways by the hospital.

However, if LAFCO decides that the hospital district should be dissolved, we urge its members to put the question on

However, if LAFCO decides that the hospital district should be dissolved, we urge its members to put the question on the ballot, so taxpayers, not a little-known board of only five members, can make the ultimate decision that could mean the loss of millions of dollars to nonprofit agencies that serve our communities. In this case, the punishment is out of line for the easily correctable bookkeeping errors by El Camino.

Find this article at:

http://www.mv-voice.com/story.php?story_id=7491

Moraga-Orinda Fire Board directors change stance on building purchase

Friday, January 20, 2012

By Jennifer Modneessi
Contra Costa Times
San Jose Mercury News

Posted: 01/20/2012 12:00:00 AM PST

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District's quest for a new administration building took an unexpected turn Wednesday night, when two board members who had supported buying a Moraga Way building abruptly changed course.

President Fred Weil and director Frank Sperling told the board they had reversed their stances on acquiring 1150 Moraga Way, a vacant, two-story office building that directors had voted to buy Dec. 28.

The announcement, which the directors said was fueled by a desire to not see the district torn apart, brought the purchase of administration space -- and plans to finance the construction of Orinda Station 43 -- to a halt.

"It was a complete and total surprise," director Richard Olsen said Thursday.

He and director Brook Mancinelli had opposed the \$1.1 million cash purchase of the building. The two also opposed an earlier plan for a lease/purchase of that building.

But a board majority authorized fire Chief Randy Bradley to enter into a purchase agreement with Linda and Jules Properties, which owns 1150 Moraga Way. That agreement required a deposit of \$25,000, which became nonrefundable after Dec. 28.

Olsen said he had been prepared to argue against the Station 43 financing proposal, which was the focus of Wednesday's meeting. In that proposal, the district would have used a lease option to finance a portion of the \$3 million construction costs of Station 43. That move, directors argued, would free up "fire flow" tax money previously earmarked for station construction to instead be used to buy 1150 Moraga Way.

Surplus cash from the fire flow funds would have allowed the district to make tenant improvements to 1150 Moraga Way, in order to sell or lease the first floor.

But controversy and criticism surrounding the transactions were too much for directors Weil and Sperling, who along with director John Wyro had supported the plans.

A visibly upset Weil admitted the board failed to properly justify its decisions to the public.

"We didn't do a good job of educating the community," said Weil, who later asked that no further comments be made by the public on the subject. None were.

Sperling said he thought the district had thoroughly vetted all options for office space, but that certain organizations and individuals in the community had created a perceived reality through "purposeful disinformation."

"It's virtually impossible to change that," Sperling said before withdrawing his support.

Wyro, who attended the meeting via a teleconference call, said he had no comment.

Bradley said that construction of Station 43 will move forward with funding from the fire flow tax. As for plans for an administration building, Bradley wouldn't speculate, but said the district might revisit options such as renting space at Orinda's City Hall or using a portable structure.

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Mt. View Sanitary District Announces Dorothy M. Sakazaki Environmental Endowment Fund

Dorothy Sakazaki was extremely active in the community, and was a longtime Mt. View Sanitary District (MVSD) board member (retiring in 2008 after 29 years of service, Dorothy died in August of 2009). She fully embraced the ideals of community service and public leadership. She lived an unselfish and giving life. She was dedicated, diligent, and devoted in her quest for good public service.

Dorothy was involved in public programs benefiting the Mt. View Sanitary District and had a special interest in protecting the environment and was actively involved in the creation and development of the District's Wetland's Field Trip Program.

The curriculum, designed in partnership with the Lindsay Wildlife Museum in Walnut Creek, CA, addresses many of the California State Science Standards for third, fourth and fifth grades with an emphasis on pollution prevention and wetlands conservation.

During the four-hour long program, students are divided into small groups that rotate through four stations including a treatment plant tour, a dip-netting activity, an exploratory wetlands hike and either an animal study activity for younger students (1st-3rd grades) or a water quality assessment activity for older students (4th grade and above).

MVSD was proud of the pioneering efforts and accomplishments that have taken place during Dorothy's terms in office. Dorothy's attendance, knowledge of constituents, and leadership were exceptional. She gave unselfishly of her time and wisdom for the benefit of the residents and property owners of MVSD. Dorothy's contributions toward the acquisition, restoration and rehabilitation of the McNabney Marsh will continue to be of benefit to hundreds of children, students, residents and visitors from around the world each year.

The growth and accomplishments of the district during her tenure in office will stand as a testament to her loyalty, dedication, and service. There are many contributions Dorothy has made; the one that she was most proud of was the Interpretive Center Program, and the In-Class Education Program in the schools the growth and accomplishments of the district during her tenure in office stand as a testament to her loyalty, dedication, and service.

The Board of Directors of the Mt. View Sanitary District directed the creation of the Dorothy M. Sakazaki Environmental Endowment Fund to posthumously honor Dorothy for her devotion to the environment and in particular, the district's Wetlands Field Trip Program.

At the December 8, 2011 Regular Board Meeting, MVSD staff presented a detailed report outlining the results of its research and a suggested plan of action in order to establish the creation of the nonprofit organization.

Creating this nonprofit public benefit corporation would allow the District to more actively seek grants and other gifts to support the Districts Environmental Programs and to clearly account to the public for the expenditure of donations. An endowment is generally defined as a financial asset donation made to a nonprofit group or institution in the form of

investment funds or other property that has a stated purpose as suggested or requested by the person or entity making the donation.

At the January 12, 2012 regular board meeting of the Mt. View Sanitary District the board adopted a resolution honoring Dorothy M. Sakazaki and created the Dorothy M. Sakazaki Environmental Endowment Fund.

Director Stan Caldwell was elected President of the Dorothy M. Sakazaki Environmental Endowment Fund, and Director David Maggi was elected Secretary.

For the past 16 years the Wetlands Education Program has been funded primarily by corporate sponsors, not the ratepayers. As the program continues to grow we will now need to seek additional sponsors and donors. One of the primary benefits of being considered tax-exempt under IRC Section 501(c) (3) is the ability to accept contributions and donations that are tax-deductible to the donor.

MVSD hopes that future contributions to the Dorothy M. Sakazaki Environmental Endowment Fund will increase and possibly open the door for additional corporate sponsors, grants, gifts, and individual donations.

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Pinole workshop to explore fire, sewage treatment issues

By Tom Lochner
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Fire protection and sewage treatment are the topics of a special workshop of the Pinole City Council on Tuesday.

Pinole is part of a three-agency battalion with the Rodeo-Hercules and Contra Costa County fire districts. Battalion 7 covers the Rodeo and Hercules fire stations and the county's El Sobrante and San Pablo stations as well as Pinole, where only the downtown station remains open after the closing of the Pinole Valley station last year.

Pinole and Hercules jointly own a wastewater treatment plant in Pinole's Bayfront Park near the Hercules city line. Issues to be explored Tuesday include rates, governance issues and treatment plant upgrades.

The context of the workshop is the severe financial condition of public agencies in the current economy.

The meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. at Pinole City Hall, 2131 Pear St.

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